

## BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION MEMEBERS

*In alphabetical order:*

**Darrell Ayers** is Vice President for Education at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Mr. Ayers is responsible for the overall planning and management of the center's Education Department, which provides performances for youth and families, art programs for schools and communities, and career development for young artists. His achievements as Vice President include opening the Kennedy Center Family Theater. Mr. Ayers has served as Vice President for the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative and as a panelist for the DC Commission on the Arts. Mr. Ayers has worked previously as a teacher and choral conductor and has toured internationally as a performer and stage director.

**Carol Bogash** is the Director of Education at the Washington Performing Arts Society. The WPAS Education department reaches over 100,000 people of all ages and offers numerous programs for students and youth, including concerts and artist residencies in schools, master classes and lectures, youth music competitions and the WPAS Summer Performing Arts Academy. The Department also offers a number of programs for adults and families.

**Fred L. Bollerer** is the Director and CEO at Corcoran Gallery of Art where he is responsible for all operational issues. Previously, Mr. Bollerer was a partner at Real Change Strategies, LLC in McLean, Va., where he provided leadership and direction to a number of non-profit organizations in the arts and cultural arena. Prior to his time with Real Change, Bollerer spent six years as a partner at Venture Philanthropy Partners in Washington, D.C., where he led investments in four major regional nonprofits totaling more than \$10 million. Mr. Bollerer serves as a board member for multiple non-profit organizations including Child Trends, See Forever Foundation and Heads Up. He received a Bachelor of Business Administration from Ohio University and a Master of Business Administration from Thunderbird School of Global Management in Phoenix, Ariz.

**Eric Booth** is the Founder of the Art and Education program and Artistic Director of the Mentoring Program at the Juilliard School. He has also served on the faculty of Stanford, NYU, Tanglewood, the Kennedy Center, and the Lincoln Center Institute. As part of the American Symphony Orchestra League's Conducting Fellows Program, he mentors young conductors and coaches young musical ensembles across the country. He has also served as Faculty Chair of the Empire State Partnership Program. He is also an award-winning actor and scholar – he has starred in six plays on Broadway and founded (and published over 80 articles in) the *Teaching Artist Journal*, the first peer-reviewed professional journal for the field.

---

**Terri Lee Freeman** is the Executive Director of the Community Foundation of the National Capitol Region. The Foundation works with individuals, families, businesses and non-profit organizations to create charitable-giving funds, and helps guide their grantmaking. The Foundation also partners with numerous non-profit and educational organizations. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Freeman will receive the DC Appleseed's Community Achievement Award.

**Tony Gittens** is the Director of the DC International Film Festival, dedicating to showcasing the work of both established filmmakers and new talent from the international community. It is partnered with many of DC's major cultural institutions, including the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities – on which Mr. Gittens also served as Executive Director until 2008, when he stepped down to focus on the festival. The Festival was born out of the Black Film Institute at the University of the District of Columbia, which Mr. Gittens founded. His tenure at both the Festival and the DC Commission was and is marked by a commitment to bringing the arts into the wider DC community. He recently lobbied city planners to include arts issues, including housing for artists, in the city's comprehensive development plan. In 2007 Mr. Gittens was knighted by the government of France for the festival's success in creating an international cultural community in DC.

**Lynn Horning** manages the Horning Family Fund, which provides grants to causes in arts education. Ms. Horning has worked with the Levine School of music to expand its outreach to children. She has also served on the board of the New City Museum. She and her husband Joe were named Washingtonians of the Year 2002 for their charitable work.

**Peter Jablow** is the President and CEO of the Levine School of Music, which has grown into one of the leading community music schools in America, with 4 campuses, 3,700 students and 150 faculty members. Levine offers music instruction to all interested students regardless of ability to pay, and currently offers free or subsidized instruction to more than 850 at-risk youth from the DC area. In 2005 he spearheaded the move of Levine's Southeast campus to the Town Hall Education Arts and Recreation Campus, which houses a number of other organizations serving at-risk youth. Mr. Jablow is the recipient of a 2010 National Arts Strategies Leading Innovation Fellowship for his work with Levine.

**Caleen Jennings** is Co-Chair of the Department of the Performing Arts and a Professor of Theatre at American University. A respected and decorated playwright, she has received a \$10,000 grant from the Kennedy Center's Fund for New American Plays and the Heideman Award from the Actor's Theatre of Louisville. She is also a two-time Helen Hayes Award nominee. A member of AU's faculty since 1989, she has directed for the university's mainstage season and taught 13 different courses for its theatre and general education programs. In 2003 she was named a Scholar-Teacher of the Year. She is also a Faculty Member of the Folger Shakespeare Library's Teaching Shakespeare Institute. She earned her BA at Bennington College and her MFA at Tisch School of the Arts/NYU.

**Michael Kaiser** is the President of the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Since taking the post in January of 2001, he has expanded the Center's educational and artistic

---

programming significantly, overseen a renovation of most of the Center's theatres and established a pioneering arts management training program. The program, the Kennedy Center Arts Management Institute, includes training on fundraising, marketing and development, resources for culturally specific and international arts organizations, and an initiative to provide free consulting to non-profit arts organizations. He has also instituted mentoring services to organizations located in the City of New York and the American Midwest.

Prior to his tenure at the Kennedy Center, Mr. Kaiser has served as Executive Director of the Royal Opera House, the American Ballet Theatre and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre Foundation. His work at all three of these organizations erased their historic accumulated deficits and expanded funding and educational programs. As a consultant he has advised many organizations, including the Jewish Museum and the New York City Opera. Before entering the arts management field, Mr. Kaiser was a management consultant in the corporate sector, working from Kaiser Associates, the firm he founded. He earned his MBA in Management from MIT's Sloan School of Management and his BS *magna cum laude* from Brandeis University.

**Scott Kenison** is the COO of the Atlas Performing Arts Center, founded in 2006 to revitalize Northeast DC through the arts. The Center, which offers everything from dance classes to filmed opera, is the only community-based arts center in DC. It is partnered with numerous artistic and community service organizations, including Step Afrika!, City at Peace, Dance Place, Levine School of Music, and the Library of Congress.

**Abel López** is the Associate Producing Director of the GALA Hispanic Theatre, a position he has held for more than 25 years. During his tenure Mr. López has produced more than 65 shows and directed 25, including the award winning hit production of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (1993). His contributions to the arts have been recognized with the Richard Bauer Leadership Award from the Washington Performing Arts Video Archive (2002), Selena Roberts Ottum Award from Americans for the Arts and the National Endowment of the Arts (2001), and The Washington Post Award for Distinguished Community Service at the 1990 Helen Hayes Awards. He sits on numerous boards, including the National Association of Latino Arts & Culture (President), Americans for the Arts (Vice Chair), and the Association of Performing Arts Presenters (Treasurer). He is a graduate of Harvard Law School and serves as an adjunct professor at George Mason University.

**Wynton Marsalis** is a legendary musician and Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, a New York-based organization which offers jazz education programs to over 50,000 participants of all ages. Mr. Marsalis was at 17 the youngest musician ever to be admitted to Tanglewood's Berkshire Music Center. He went on to study at the Juilliard School. His storied career has included contributions to jazz, gospel, funk, classical and other genres. He has won numerous awards and holds over 30 honorary degrees by universities across America. Equally impressive are his achievements in community service – in addition to Jazz at Lincoln Center, he personally funds student scholarships, has been appointed a UN Ambassador for Peace, and continues to serve aspiring musicians as a teacher to his private students.

---

**Neale Perl** is the President of the Washington Performing Arts Society, one of the nation's leading presenters of the performing arts. He has been influential in offering more moderately-priced performances in WPAS's recent seasons, with the aim of exposing DC's youth community to the arts. He has also served as co-founder, executive director and artistic director of the Washington Chamber Society, and as assistant director of the Maryland Summer Institute for the Creative and Performing Arts at the University of Maryland in College Park.

**Nancy Schwalb** is the Founder and Executive/Artistic Director of the DC Creative Writing Workshop, based out of Congress Heights in Southeast DC. The mission of the DCCWW is to bring the joys of creative writing to at-risk youth in DC's public schools. The DCCWW provides in-class instruction, after-school programming, performance opportunities (such as poetry slams) and other education resources, such as its library. Ms. Schwalb, who also founded the Youth Poetry Slam League, has been teaching creative writing at Hart Middle School in DC since 1995. Her work has been published in *Vanity Fair* and the *Washington City Paper*, among others. She has served as a Kennedy Center teaching fellow and is also a six-time Larry Neal Award winner. She holds a MFA in Creative Writing from George Mason University.

**Jonathan Silver** is a prominent member of the DC business community. He co-founded the venture capital firm Core Capital Partners, then left the firm in fall 2008 to serve on President Obama's Treasury Department transition team. He now works with a group of New York-based investment firms on finding salvageable toxic assets and opportunities in public-private investments, including issues in and around DC public schools. He also sits on the boards of the Community Foundation of the Greater Washington Area and the anti-hunger group Share Our Strength.

**George Vradenburg** is the Chairman of the Board of the Phillips Collection. A passionate community activist, he is also involved with the Geoffrey Beene Foundation-Alzheimer's Initiative, the DC Education Compact (dedicated to fostering student success in the DC public school system), the Washington Scholarship Fund and DC Children First (supporting Opportunity Scholarships to private schools for low-income DC kids), in addition to serving as the President of his own Vradenburg Foundation. Previous board positions have included Human Rights First and the Survivors' Fund (serving families of 9/11 victims at the Pentagon). He received his BA *magna cum laude* from Oberlin College and his JD *cum laude* from Harvard Law.

**Craig Wallace**, an actor, is a fixture in the DC theatre scene. He has extensive credits with the Shakespeare Theatre Company and has also performed at the Kennedy Center, Woolly Mammoth, the Folger, Roundhouse, Everyman, and Arena Stages.

**Septime Webre** is the Artistic Director of the Washington Ballet. He has also served as Artistic Director of the American Repertory Ballet in New Jersey, and as a member of the board of directors for Dance/USA. He has been honored by Young Audiences of DC and received several fellowships for his choreography, which has been shown all over North America. As a dancer,

---

he has been featured in works by George Balanchine, Paul Taylor, Anthony Tudor, Alvin Ailey, and Merce Cunningham, as well as a number of roles from the classical repertoire. He earned a BA from the University of Texas in History/Pre-Law.

**Brian Williams** is the Founder and Director of Step Afrika International Cultural Festival, which began as a cross-cultural exchange focusing on exploring American step dance and South African gumboot dance, and then became a highly acclaimed dance production which toured across the country. Currently the festival offers numerous workshops to youth and fosters cultural exchange between the United States and Africa.

**Robert Young** is the Head of Education at the Folger Shakespeare Library, the world's largest collection of printed works by Shakespeare. The Education Initiative at the Library advocates a performance-based approach to teaching literature, particularly Shakespeare's work, to students from kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The Initiative offers workshops and institutes for teachers, including a growing collection of online resources, and in-class programming for students. Their resources are open to any public school in DC and beyond.